

P-17: Hands Off Halloween

Venue: Community

Goal: Preventing Initiation of Tobacco Use

Sponsoring Organization: Bremerton - Kitsap County Health Department

Abstract: “Hands Off Halloween” was a storefront survey project that originally focused on the use of Halloween images to promote alcohol. The project was recreated in Kitsap County to include both tobacco and alcohol with the support of the Tobacco Free Kitsap Coalition. The purpose of the project was to educate community youth about tobacco and alcohol advertising, encourage retailers to adopt responsible advertising and product placement practices and ultimately reduce youth access.

Fifteen community teams, composed of 16 adults and 30 youth were involved in the project. Volunteers were educated about how advertising and product placement can encourage youth to use tobacco and alcohol products.

Of the 150 retailers in the county, 148 were surveyed. Tobacco statistic gathered during the survey included: a total of 683 ads inside and 423 ads outside were counted. About one-fourth (24%) of retailers did not have all tobacco products in a secure location, to prevent shoplifting. About one-fifth (18%) of retailers had tobacco products near candy or other youth-appealing items.

Letters were sent to retailers detailing the survey results and offering assistance to improve the sales climate of their stores. Certificates of appreciation were sent to retailers that had 10 or less tobacco ads and no sales infraction or complaints against them.

Recommendations: Develop relationships with organizations that have similar missions and resources to share.

Target youth, including high risk youth, to conduct surveys and recruit adult volunteers that are experienced in working them.

Acknowledge and reward good retailer advertising practices.

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